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VOLUME 65, Number 49 Kewanna, IN 46939 Thursday, Dec. 22nd, 2011 USPS 401-840 PRICE :-: 40c Per Copy

Local ISO classification upgraded

The Kewanna-Union Township Fire Volunteer Fire Department has been informed that, effective December 1, the community's ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC) has been upgraded to Class 4 from Class 6.

The classification is set by the Insurance Service Office (ISO). ISO collects and evaluates information from communities in the United States on their structure fire suppression capabilities. The surveys are conducted whenever it appears that there is a possibility of a classification change.

The ISO rating plays an important role in the underwriting process used by insurance companies. Most insurance companies in the country, including the largest ones, use PPC information as part of their decision making when deciding what business to write, coverages to offer or prices to charge for personal or commercial property insurance. ISO ratings range from Class 1 to Class 10, Class 1 being the highest representing exemplary fire protection. Class 10 indicates that the area's fire suppression program does not meet minimum recognition criteria. The Class 4 rating granted to Kewanna and Union Township is a real plus for local property owners when it comes to purchasing insurance.

Kewanna/Union Township is one of 73 communities in the state to receive the Class 4 rating. There are no Class 1 ratings, only one Class 2 rating and 45 Class 3 ratings. A total of 1,695 communities in Indiana were rated by the ISO.

Three major features are considered when establishing the ISO rating for a community: the fire alarm and communication system (10%), the fire department (50%), and the water supply system (40%). In many communities, ISO develops a split classification; the first applies to properties within five miles of a fire station and within 1000 feet of a fire hydrant. The second classification applies to properties beyond 1000 feet of a hydrant, but within five road miles of a fire station. The local classification applies both to the town and the township.

The local fire department and water department are to be commended for the effort, time and money they have put in to gaining a better ISO classification.

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James F. Talbott VFW December Schedule

December 11 - Christmas party, 2-4 p.m., for ages infant through 11 years of age
December 13 - VFW meeting
December 18 - Women's Auxiliary meeting, 7 p.m.
December 27 - Men's Auxiliary meeting, 6:30 p.m.
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Christmas Eve candlelight service at Methodist Church

The Kewanna Union Methodist Church will hold its annual Christmas Eve candlelight service Saturday, December 24, beginning at 11 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come worship Jesus in singing traditional Christmas carols and experiencing the joy of the season.

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To Reserve the Fire Dept. Community Room
Call Bev Baldwin at
574-653-2622 evenings
+++

Kewanna Community
FOOD PANTRY
United Methodist Church
Open Thursdays by
Appointment
Call (574) 653-2201 or
(574) 653-9052

Morning for ladies at Mahseh Center

Debbie Wingerter is planning to conduct another morning for ladies Saturday, January 28, at the Mahseh Center on Lake Bruce.

The morning will start at 10 a.m. with coffee, tea and fellowship followed by the message: God is My King in selected Psalms. Lunch will be served at 11:30. The cost for the event is \$5 and those planning to attend should pre-register by January 21 by calling the center at 574-653-3277 and leaving a message or you may email Debbie at wingerterb@aol.com.

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Kewanna-Union Township
Public Library Hours
Mon., Tues. Wed. and Fri.
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Thurs. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sat. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Closed Sundays and Holidays
+++

BMV announces holiday hours

Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles Commissioner R. Scott Waddell today announced that license branches will be closed on Friday, Dec. 23, Saturday, Dec. 24, and Monday, Dec. 26, in observance of the Christmas holiday. All license branches will resume normal hours of operation on Tuesday, Dec. 27. In addition, license branches will be open on New Year's Eve, but closed on Monday, Jan. 2 in observance of New Year's Day. All license branches will resume normal hours of operation on Tuesday, Jan. 3.

Customers needing to conduct business with the BMV without visiting a license branch can visit the improved myBMV.com website. Some transactions can also be completed by phone through the BMV Customer Service Center at 888-692-6841.

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The News In Brief

Due to the Christmas holiday, The Observer will be published a day later next week. We will be printing and mailing on Thursday rather than Wednesday. Unless someone comes forward in the next few days, that will also be our last issue of The Observer as we are planning to retire after 45 years of publishing the local newspaper.

Akron Area Arts League member, Mike Yazel, is the featured artist this month at the Fulton County Public Library in Rochester. Mike lives in the Mentone area and paints rural landscapes in oils and watercolors. His watercolor of Webb's Pharmacy in downtown Akron was accepted into the Hoosier Salon earlier this year. The salon is one of the most prestigious art organizations in Indiana. His work will be on display at the library until January 13.

Town clerk-treasurer Jenny Kay is looking for old black and white pictures of Kewanna scenes to place in the town hall. If you have any you would like to share, take them to her at the town hall, 308 S. Logan Street.

The Kewanna town council will meet in special session at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, December 29, at the town hall to conduct year-end business.

The swearing in ceremony for newly elected town officials is scheduled to be held Sunday, January 1, at 2 p.m. at Rochester City Hall. The ceremony is open to the public and all are invited to attend. A reception with cookies and punch will follow the swearing in ceremony performed by Judge Wayne Steele. (Note: Kewanna town officials are not planning to participate in this ceremony, but will be sworn in at a later date.)

14,000 shoe box gifts were collected in this area for Operation Christmas Child. The shoe boxes are filled with items for kids suffering from natural disasters, war, terrorism, famine and poverty. These boxes, along with others collected world wide, will be delivered to 8.5 million kids. The local Methodist Church participated in a small way this year, but hopes to expand their numbers next year by collecting items for the boxes beginning in January. For more information, call Tammy at 574-653-9052.

The Central Indiana Transit Task Force plans to ask state legislators to approve funding for a mass transit plan that would include train service from Noblesville to downtown Indianapolis. The legislation would also include a transit governance structure. The group purposes to pay for the \$1.3 billion project through an income tax of three-tenths of one percent in Marion and Hamilton counties and federal money.



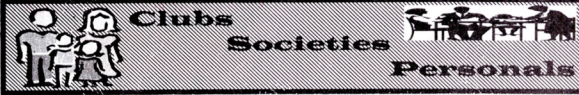
Merry Christmas

Time to cherish the many blessings we all enjoy ... friends, family, health and joy ...and to renew our faith in His words.

As this Christmas season finds us nearing our retirement years, we are especially thankful for our subscribers and advertisers over the last 45 years.

Thank You ALL from the bottom of our hearts and may God bless you this special time of year and grant you a great New Year.

The Observer Joe & Karen Good



Indiana State Fairgrounds Upcoming Events

Indiana On the Fly - Fly Fishing & Wing Shooting Show: Jan. 7 in the Ag/Hort Building. Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: \$10; children 10 and younger free; Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in uniform admitted free. For more info: www.indianaflyfishingshow.com.
World's Greatest Hobby Show on Tour: Jan. 7 - 8 in the Marsh Blue Ribbon Pavilion. Hours: Sat. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: \$10 (good for both days); children 16 and younger free. For more info: www.wghshow.com.
46th Annual Central Indiana RV Show: Jan. 7 - 15 in the West Pavilion. Hours: Mon.-Fri. 1 to 9 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: \$7; Senior Citizens (60+) \$6; children 16 and younger free

with adult admission. For more info: Mark Bowersox (317) 247-6258 or www.centralindianaryshow.net.
Midwest Reptile Show: Jan. 8 in the Southwest Pavilion. Hours: Sun. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission: \$5; children 8 and younger free. For more info: Brian Hahn (317) 899-1899 or www.midwestreptile.com.
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LOCALS

Jane Teeter of Bluffton arrived Monday, Dec. 19, for an overnight visit with her mother, Ruth Cogdill. Also stopping by that day was Janet Norris. Tuesday morning, Dec. 20, Ruth and Jane were joined by Ruth's son, Tim Cogdill of Macy, for coffee and a lot of catching up on family happenings. Virginia Agnew hosted a Christmas gathering for her family Saturday. Celebrating the special season with her were Marsha and Ed Tomerlin, Erin Tomerlin and Ashlyn and Eric Tomerlin and

friend, Michelle, and her daughter, Lauren, all of Hebron; Bob and Vanessa Plantz, Serena and Alexander of Highland; Jeremy and Angie Agnew and Mia, Westfield; John and Pam Agnew, Jarrod and Amy Agnew, Zachary and Alexis, Joshua Agnew and friend Christy, Jeff and Kim Hunter, Raean and Caleb and his friend Roberto, Greg and Jackie Agnew and Jeff and Tina Agnew, Shayna, Kaylena and Lucinda, all of Rochester. After a delicious dinner and visiting, everyone enjoyed watching the unveiling of gifts.

Those persons who will be having birthdays next week (so please remember to give them your best regards) are: Dorothy Lease and Trent Powell, Dec. 25; Robert Bangel, Craig Bitterling, Mike Clyde, Kathy Dees, Gwen Hott and Julie Nies, Dec. 26; Andrew Bitterling, Rachel Evers, Amanda Heckeman, Taylor Warner, Beth Weller and Anna

The Observer

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Name

Merry Christmas and have a safe new year.

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Kewanna Town Council Meetings
First Thursday of Each Month
7 p.m. - Town Hall
+++

NOTICE... OBSERVER OFFICE HOURS

8 am - 11:30 am
12:30 pm - 4 pm
Mon., Tues., Wed.

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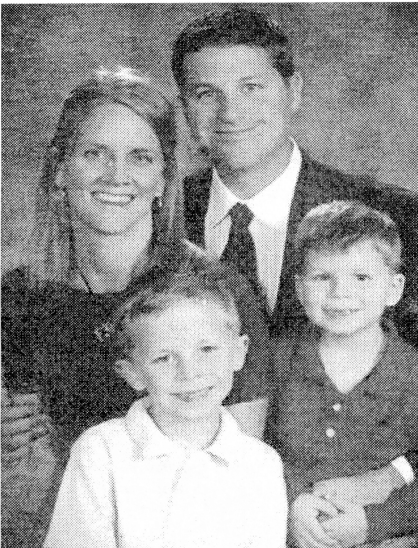
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Hospital Notes

WOODLAWN HOSPITAL

December 8
Births - Mark and Diane Simpson, Indianapolis, a daughter

December 12
Admissions - Lester Good, Kewanna; Betty Singleton and Wenonah Maitland, Rochester; Diane Simpson, Indianapolis
Dismissals - Wenonah Maitland and Hannah Gonzalez, Rochester; Annie Pruett, Kewanna
Births - Omar and Hannah Gonzalez, Rochester, a son; Harley and Maria Hecht, Rochester, a son
December 13
Admissions - Anna Craft, Akron
Births - Ashley Eggleston, Macy, a daughter
December 14
Admissions - Judith Leary, Plymouth; John Casey, Akron
Dismissals - Annie Pruett, Kewanna

Births - Timothy and Juanna Uhrich, Kewanna, a daughter
December 15
Admissions - Jennifer Ringle, Rochester
Dismissals - Hannah Gonzalez and son and Maria Hecht and son, Rochester
December 16
Admissions - Dorothy Trantham, Rochester
Dismissals - Ashley Eggleston and daughter, Macy; Judith Leary, Plymouth; Anna Craft and John Casey, Akron
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DEATHS



RAYMOND E. WELLER

Raymond E. Weller, 88, Kewanna, passed away Sunday, December 18, 2011, at Woodlawn Hospital in Rochester.

Born July 14, 1923 in Kewanna, he was the son of the late Jesse and Cora (Evans) Weller. He was married July 16, 1977, in Kewanna to Beth (Tomlinson) Reason, who survives.

Ray was a 1941 graduate of Kewanna High School and a veteran of the U.S. Army-Air Force, serving in World War II.

He was a lifelong electrician with IBEW Local 531 in LaPorte; a member of the James F. Talbott VFW Post No. 1121, Kewanna; and the Kewanna United Methodist Church.

Survivors include his wife, Beth Weller, Kewanna; two sons, Richard "Rick" Weller and his wife, Belinda, LaPorte and Donald R. Weller of Georgia; two daughters, Randy R. Neidig and her husband, Steve, Bourbon, and Cora Lynn Clemans and her husband, Howard, Kewanna; two step-daughters, Beth Ann Deckard and Linda Tufts and her husband, Steve, all of Lebanon, Ohio; and a step-son, Donald Reason and his wife, Chantel, of

France. He is also survived by 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Helen Baldwin, and a granddaughter, Missy Weller. Services were held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, December 21, at Harrison-Metzger & Rans Funeral Home, Kewanna Chapel, with Pastor Steve Tufts and Rev. Todd Wilson officiating. Burial was in the Kewanna Citizens-IOOF Cemetery.

A visitation was held Tuesday evening at the funeral home. Memorial contributions may be made to the Kewanna United Methodist Church. Online condolences and personal tributes may be made to the Weller family at www.harrisonmetzger.com.
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DR. PAUL BRADFORD HEINSEN

Dr. Paul Bradford Heinsen, DVM, 91, Winamac, passed away at 9:35 a.m. Saturday, December 17, 2011, at Rivercrest Specialty Hospital, Mishawaka.
Born August 20, 1920, in Port

Clinton, Ohio, he was the son of the late Edward Carl and Helen Angela Montgomery Heinsen. He was married in 1941 to Nancy Gill who died in 1967. He was then married to Marilyn Capper on November 15, 1968, in Kokomo. She preceded him in death on July 12, 2008.

Paul was a former resident of Kewanna, Kokomo, and Punta Gorda, Florida.

A Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, he graduated from Ohio State University in 1943. He practiced as a veterinarian in St. Marys, Ohio, Kewanna and Kokomo.

Paul served as a captain in the US Army during World War II. He was a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Contract Bridge League.

He moved from Punta Gorda, Florida, on December 31, 2007. He enjoyed fishing, bridge, golf, good food and watching sports. He also enjoyed traveling, entertaining and telling stories.

Survivors include a son, Charles E. Heinsen, MD, Winamac; two daughters, Susan

G. Fix and her husband, David, South Miami, Florida, and Nancy A. Munson and her husband, Bob, Danville, California; a sister, Margaret Heinsen, Port Clinton, Ohio; 27 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wives; a great-grandchild, Katie Miles; and a brother, Robert Heinsen.

Private family services will be held at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

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KEWANNA-UNION TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY ...
Charles Rude, Interim Director
P.O. Box 365, Kewanna, IN 46939
Ph: (574) 653-2011 / Fax (574) 653-2130

Welcome to the Kewanna-Union Township Public Library. The new addition is open! Please come in and check out some new books, movies or just ride the elevator. The library has increased our WIFI signal and is adding more computers to keep up with the demand. The library would like to thank the

Community Foundation for donating an electric sign for the front yard. The sign will help the library advertise events in the area. I also want to thank The Observer for supporting the library over the years. THANK YOU!

Upcoming events at the library include:

Dec. 24 - closed for Christmas holiday
Dec. 31 - closed for New Year holiday
Jan. 14 - game day at noon
Jan. 17 - Friends meeting at 4:30 p.m.
Jan. 28 - Story time program at 2 p.m.
Jan. 30 - board meeting at 6 p.m.

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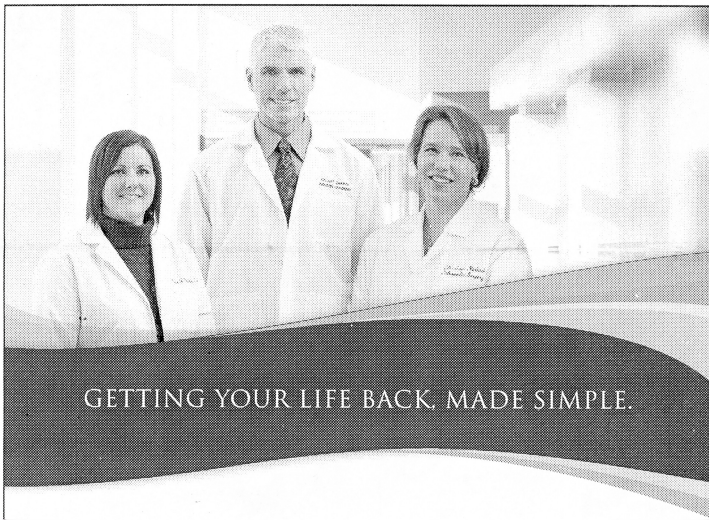
Business Hours

Fulton County Court House
Fulton County Office Building
8 to 4 p.m.

Monday through Friday

+++

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9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays
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+++



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Looking Back

SIXTY YEARS AGO December 28, 1951

The Kewanna Indians came within a hair of winning the four-way tourney Saturday night, December 20, at Winamac, but lost a heart-breaking game to Star City. Kewanna held a 26-18 lead at intermission. High men for Kewanna were Aldridge with 10 points, followed by Carlton who came through with nine.

Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Engle are the parents of a daughter, Karen Marie, born December 22. Karen weighed 5 pounds and 15 ounces at birth. Mr. Engle is home on leave from the Navy. Mrs. Engle is the former Mildred Easterday.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hickie, Leonardport, are the parents of a son born Wednesday morning at Logansport Memorial Hospital. The baby weighed 8 1/2 pounds and has been named Guy W.

Michael Baumgartner is spending his Christmas vacation visiting his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. E. O. Baumgartner in Fort Wayne.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Hickie received word Wednesday that Mr. Hickie's father, Clem Hickie, of Benton Harbor, Michigan, is critically ill.

Kenny and Keith Troutman were weekend guests in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Van Tuyle Gillespie.

A birthday party was held Saturday, December 22, in the home of Mrs. Gerald Buskirk for her daughter, Jane. Guests were Tommy, Gary and Phillip Troutman.

Sgt. Jim Zellers arrived home Friday, December 21, for a 15-day furlough which he plans to

spend with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Zellers. Sgt. Zellers is stationed at Nellis Air Force Base, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Pvt. Bob Hubeny of Fort Bliss, Texas, is visiting with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hubeny, Sr., for a few days. He arrived Sunday.

FIFTY-FIVE YEARS AGO December 27, 1956

George Schmidt was momentarily blinded by bright lights early Thursday morning on his way to work at the American Rubber Co. plant in LaPorte. As a result, he missed a curve in the road, knocked down a road sign and went through a fence, coming to stop in Bob Reichard's corn field on State Road 17, about seven miles north of Kewanna. Schmidt was uninjured but his car was badly damaged.

Private Tom Gundrum, Fulton, has been transferred from Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to Fort Bliss, Texas.

Renata Weller has received her port call. She and her children, Renate, Willie and Jimmy, will leave January 3 for New York City and will then leave from

there for Orleans, France, January 5, where she will join her husband, Sgt. Paul Weller. He has been stationed in France since July.

A group of women from the Worthwhile HD Club visited the county home Friday afternoon where they sang Christmas carols and distributed gifts to the residents. Included in the group were Margaret Gillespie, Blanche Farr, Margaret Werner, Mary Hines, Florence Hines, Sue Anderson and Nellie Lisey.

FIFTY YEARS AGO December 28, 1961

St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Winamac was the scene Sunday evening, December 17, of the marriage of Kay Ann Fisher, Kewanna, to Larry Lewis Koebecke, also of Kewanna. The bride is the daughter of Mrs. John Hiflicker, Kewanna, and Mr. Donald Fisher, Rochester. The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Koebecke, Kewanna.

The drug store in Kewanna, known as Bob's Store over the past several years, is closing Sunday, December 31. The store is owned by Bob Dutches, who has served the community faithfully. Also, the Key Theatre owned by Joe McPherson closed a week ago Saturday. McPherson continues to operate Key Discount Service.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Huey, Rt. 1, Kewanna, will celebrate their golden wedding anniversary Sunday, December 31, with an open house from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Carl Carr home, Rt. 1, Kewanna. The couple has one daughter, Mrs. Ruth Carr.

Officers for the coming year were elected at a recent meeting of the Kewanna Masonic Lodge with the present master, Bill Donathen, presiding. Elected were: Devon Overmyer,

worshipful master; Marvin Engle, senior warden; Marvin Willis, junior warden; J Masteller, senior deacon; John Chase, junior deacon; Ronald Elston, senior steward; Ralph Stayton, junior steward; Eldon Smith, secretary; and Robert Masteller, treasurer.

Army Pvt. Joe Crill, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Crill, completed two weeks of combat training at Pike National Forest in Colorado with other personnel from the 1st Division's 12th Infantry December 9. Crill, a gunner in the infantry's Company B which is regularly located at Fort Riley, Kansas, entered the Army last July. The 21-year-old is a 1958 graduate of Aubbeenaubee High School.

Snow measuring up to four inches deep blanketed this

locality Tuesday, with weather forecasts for much colder temps by Wednesday morning. Highways are reportedly very slick.

FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO December 29, 1966

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Masteller, Rt. 1, Kewanna, announce the engagement and forthcoming marriage of their daughter, Mary Nell, to Ronald J. Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Smith, Rt. 5, Logansport. Miss Masteller is a graduate of Kewanna High School and Ball State University. She is teaching at Lincoln Junior High School in Logansport. Her fiancé is a graduate of Metea High School and Purdue University and is currently engaged in farming. The couple will be married January 28 in the Kewanna Methodist Church.

Con't. To Page Five



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"Looking Back"

Con't. From Page Four

Everett Cunningham, 63, Grass Creek, died at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday in Memorial Hospital, Logansport. He had operated a garage in Grass Creek for 35 years. Services were held at 1:30 p.m. Friday in the Grass Creek EUB Church. Rev. John Reddix officiated and burial was in the Grass Creek Cemetery.

Les Shidaker, Kewanna, came close to a bowler's dream - a perfect 300 game - at Quick's Lanes in Rochester Thursday night. He rolled ten straight strikes, but then got only eight pins on his 11th ball and spared out for a 288 game. He also had games of 195 and 172 for a 665 series.

THIRTY YEARS AGO

December 24, 1981
The Kewanna Indians traveled to Marion Bennett Saturday evening where they lost their seventh game of the season, 81-57. The Indians hosted the Bennett Trojans a week ago and were defeated 74-52 at the Rubbee Civic Center. High scorers for the Indians Saturday were Jeff Markley, 19; Randy Hall, 14; and Jeff Good, 10.

The Kewanna Saddle Club met December 9 at the club house for its annual Christmas party and carry-in dinner. Grace was offered by Wilbur Rude. The club house and tables were

decorated by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Harris. Clem Good, vice president, presided over the business meeting. The next meeting will be March 17 in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Metzger, Rochester.

Jerry French, Kewanna, is a patient in Logansport Memorial Hospital where he was admitted after suffering a heart attack.

Mr. and Mrs. Theo Carlson spent one day last week visiting their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Dick Carlson and family at LaFontaine.

Mr. and Mrs. Dean Kumlser spent several days in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kumlser and family at LaFontaine. Sunday, the George Hoover family and the Robert Kumlser family of Rochester joined them to celebrate Dean's 71st birthday.

Mr. and Mrs. Mike Doty attended the Woodlawn Hospital Christmas party Wednesday. Todd Doty celebrated his birthday Saturday with his family at the Pizza Hut in Rochester. In the evening, following Christmas caroling with members of the Pleasant Hill church, the group enjoyed birthday cake and other refreshments at the church.

Army Pvt. Malcolm Howdeshell, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Howdeshell, Sr., Kewanna, has completed the Vulcan crewman course under the One Station

Unit Training Program at the U.S. Army Air Defense School, Fort Bliss, Texas.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

December 26, 1991
Amy Collins of Kewanna was one of four recipients of the 1991-92 R. Wayne and Virginia Bryant Smith scholarship at Manchester College. Amy is a graduate of Caston and a senior at Manchester. The scholarship provides assistance to promising students, with strong preference given to Fulton County residents. R. Wayne Smith is a 1949 alumnus of the college.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Anderson, Rt. 1, Kewanna, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a family dinner at Pinder's Restaurant in Culver December 21. Mr. Anderson and the former Ruth Ann Tomlinson were married December 20, 1941, in Goshen.

The 1937 graduating class of Kewanna High School met recently at the Carousel Restaurant in Logansport for a Christmas luncheon. Class members present included Alice House, Berniece Simhauser, Madlyn Fort, Isabelle Brockey, Bob Troutman, Mary Alice Overmyer, Rosetta Newgent and Elsie Turner. Ruth Walters and Annetta Baker, former classmates, were also present for the occasion.

Harriet Stoudt spent Sunday

with Mr. and Mrs. Jim Fisher, Matthew and Kathleen. Bill Stoudt of Anderson was an afternoon visitor in the Fisher home.

Jennifer Young was the guest of honor at a birthday party recently at the home of her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Fisher. Helping her celebrate her 13th birthday were Mr. and Mrs. Terry Young, Brian and Matthew, and Don Van Duyn.

Christmas Eve guests of Delbert Good were Mr. and Mrs. John Good and Kirk of Star City; Kris Good and Holly Good of Indianapolis; Dick Good of Logansport; Mr. and Mrs. Brad Good and sons of Rochester; Mark Smith and Lindsey of Winamac; Kelly Good and Mr. and Mrs. Joe Good.

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A Christmas Poem

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney with presents to give,
and to see just who in this home did live.
I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No rolling by mantle, just boots filled with sand,
and on the wall pictures of far distant lands.
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
a sobering thought came to my mind.
For this house was different, so dark and so dreary,
the home of a soldier, now I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,
curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
not how I pictured a United States soldier.
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night,
owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to
fight.

Soon round the world, the children would play,
and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
on a cold Christmas eve in a land far from home.
The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.
The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;

I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
My life is my God, my country, my corps."
The soldier rolled over and soon drifted to sleep.
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still,
and we both shivered from the cold evening's chill.

I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night,
this guardian of honor so willing to fight.
Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,
Whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas day, all is
secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right.
"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night."

by Lance Corporal James M. Schmidt



A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

Peace on earth, good will to all as we celebrate
the Saviour's birth. May this joy of the season
be yours to share with family and friends.

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"Slices of Life"

By: Jill Bertler



Ignoring the snoring and other caveats of marriage

One morning not long ago, I awoke to find my husband's side of the bed empty. He came into the room a few minutes later. I asked where he'd been and he said I'd been snoring so he left for a quieter venue on the couch. I thought about disputing the snoring allegation (clearly I do not snore), but rolled over for a few extra minutes of sleep instead.

When the same set of events unfolded a few days later, I felt it was time to address the situation.

"Honey," I said in my gentlest of morning voices, "You've been snoring every night for the last 10 years and I don't get up and leave. It's called marriage."

He didn't give me much of a reply, but every morning since, his head's been on the pillow next to mine.

For my husband and me, this wasn't about noises in the night, but about the things we do in the name of wedded bliss. (Like pretending our spouse doesn't snore.)

I've been married for over 20 (consecutive) years to the same person. Like most brides, I walked down the aisle with glitter in my shoes and visions of

sugarplums in my future. Marriage was going to be a piece of cake – a walk in the park. I just knew it.

What I didn't consider is cake can grow stale and a walk in the park can result in doggy doo on your shoes. Marriage can be messy because life can be messy.

I have a friend who's tried the whole marriage thing a time or two. She tells me my life is easy because I've been married for 20 years. Anyone who thinks being married for 20 years is easy has not been married for 20 years.

When I said, "I do," I never contemplated snoring, stinky feet or flatulence. I didn't think about times when money might be scarce and the bills abundant. Things like plugged toilets and clogged sinks weren't even a blip on my radar. I thought my husband and I would agree on everything from how to squeeze the toothpaste tube to the best way to discipline our children. I believed we'd never ever go to bed angry and by all means we'd always communicate effectively without misinterpretation or misunderstanding.

I've learned a lot in the last two decades.

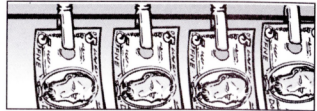
I've learned sometimes you take your spouse for granted

and let little things get under your skin. When this happens, it's important to ignore your skin. I've learned a marriage starts with love, but a good marriage contains healthy doses of patience, understanding, persistence, trust and a smidgen of luck. I've learned disagreements get solved faster if both a husband and wife are willing to apologize more than half the time. I've learned you never give up on your spouse. I've learned most worthwhile things in life are not always easy. Marriage is near the top of the list.

More than 20 years ago, I married my best friend. He's been by my side and had my back ever since. I, in turn, have had his. We've raised tomatoes, goldfish and children. We share the same last name and the same inside jokes. If one of our kids does something cute or smart, we catch each other's eye with a knowing glance that makes my heart thump. When he's away, I miss him. We've squabbled and we've loved, but mostly we've made it work. Together.

Marriage can be a piece of cake and a walk in the park – as long as you are willing to rebake your cake every so often and watch the ground for doggy doo with each step forward. And, if your spouse is snoring, I advise you don't get up and leave – unless you plan to come right back.

+++



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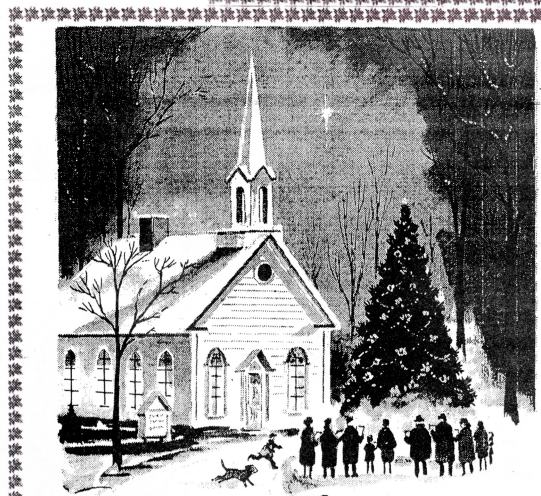
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Caston wrestling

Fountain Central won the 10-team Caston invitational Friday and Saturday with a record of 9-0. Caston wrestlers went 4-5 for the two-day event.

Team scores included Caston-Clinton Prairie, 59-12; Caston-North Western, 39-30; Caston-Frontier, 54-15; Caston-Pioneer, 42-24; North White-Caston, 56-12; Calumet-Caston, 54-12; Fountain Central-Caston, 57-15; North Judson-Caston, 41-33; West Central-Caston, 45-12.

Individual records for Caston included:

113 Derek Berkshire, 5-4 with three pins
126 Braden Moss, 5-4 with three pins
132 Kyle Harvey, 7-2 with four pins
138 Andy Wirt, 2-7 with two pins
152 Graham Redweik, 8-1 with five pins. He won his class.
160 Taylor Grounds, 6-3 with two pins
170 Jeremy Gonzalez, 8-1 with four pins
182 Ryan Coffing, 6-3 with three pins
195 Derek Klimes, 1-8
220 Juan Gonzalez, 3-6 with one pin

+++

Caston Athletic Schedule

Friday, Dec. 23 - Community State Bank Shootout basketball tourney at Pioneer, JV boys at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.; varsity boys at 12 noon and 7 p.m.; varsity wrestling invitational at Rochester, 9 a.m.
Friday, Dec. 30 - varsity wrestling invitational at Twin Lakes, 8 a.m.

+++



The earliest coins were made in the parts of modern Turkey that formed the ancient kingdom of Lydia. The coins were made from a mixture of gold and silver called electrum.

Don't let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing time to the best possible use.

—Earl Nightingale

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Thank You

We thank everyone who helped us make it through our bad times this year.

We lost Marvin in February and Karen in November to their cancers.

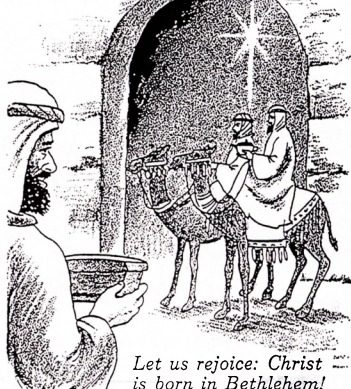
Special thanks go to Kyle Rans of Harrison-Metzger & Rans Funeral Homes, to Pastor Scott Meneely and the Church of Christ for both services, and the ladies of the church for preparing the meals. Whatever you did to get us through the year will always be remembered and appreciated.

Mildred Engle and family
The family of Karen Engle Lawson

Dogs come when they're called; cats take a message and get back to you later.

—Mary Bly

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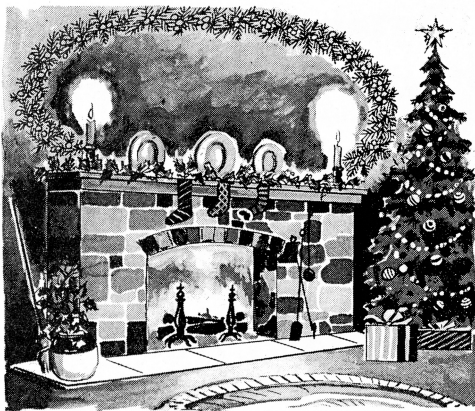
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Town & Country CHATTER...

By: Julie Brown Ph.: (574) 653-2451

Pauline Scales enjoyed attending the Caston Elementary School's Christmas program, Thursday, Dec. 8. Seven of her great-grandchildren were among the performers.

Pauline and Julie Brown were in Mishawaka Thursday, Dec. 15. They braved the traffic and crowds and did a little shopping and dined at The Old Country Buffet.

Renee Colley had a "working" visitor over the weekend. Serving as her chauffeur while her car was on the "sick list" was Dick Fedorchak.

Tom and Barb LaFollette and their great-grandson, Eli Lopez, visited the Rochester VFW post twice Saturday, Dec. 17. In the morning, they went for a breakfast of Mickey Mouse pancakes and to visit friends. In the afternoon, they attended the Christmas party for the children in the area. The little ones enjoyed snacks, games, making ornaments with their pictures on them and talking with Santa.

Florence Baldwin and her

family enjoyed their annual Christmas get-together Saturday. Forty-five members of the family were able to gather in the community room of the local fire station for dinner and a lot of visiting.

Ann Zartman enjoyed celebrating the Christmas holiday with her family Saturday. Gathering in the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Jane and Rich Green, for breakfast and dinner and in her home for opening of gifts were her daughter, Shirley Zartman; her grandchildren and their families, Dawn and Rick Nikolich and Luke of Mount Vernon and Dale Green and Wendy with Josh and Jacob of Culver; her great-granddaughter and her husband, Haley and José Vera of Michigan; her great-grandsons and their families, Heath Harding and Tanesha with Jaden and Makhia and Holt and Stephanie Harding of Rochester; and José's brother.

Dave and Maria Evers hosted their family's

Christmas gathering Saturday. They were joined by 35 members of their family for lots of good food, games and visiting. The oldest members of the family to attend were Dave's parents, Leonard and Nancy Evers, and the youngest member to attend was Dave and Maria's great-niece, Zoe Rockey.

Ruth Cogdill had surprise visitors Saturday evening. Stopping by were her brother and sister, David and Janel Norris. They brought Ruth some Christmas treats and everyone had a great visit catching up on all the family news.

Florence Hogan had company Sunday, Dec. 18. Coming up for a family chat and to help set up the remainder of her holiday decorations were her daughter and son-in-law, Wendy and Dan Kelly of Lafayette. The Kellys also decorated the family graves for Christmas.

Rick and Dawn Nikolich and Luke were in West Lafayette Sunday. They had a wonderful time attending commencement exercises at Purdue University. The Nikoliches' daughter, Britany, was among the graduates.

Barb and Jon Gast had several visitors Sunday. Stopping by throughout the day were their son, Rick Weiler of LaPorte; their daughter and son-in-law, Randy and Steve Neidig of Bourbon; Larry and Beverly Baldwin; and the Baldwins' daughter and son-in-law, Stephanie and Curtis Greisch. Barb also enjoyed talking with her sister, Betty Leazenby, by telephone.

Among those who enjoyed being serenaded Sunday evening by the Kewanna United Methodist Church youth groups was Florence Hogan.

+++

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